

JUNE · 1875

²⁰ Maria L. Ferribee Watkins, born in 1857 in Elizabeth City, N.C., was the sister of Alice M. Ferribee. She taught in North Carolina and Virginia for two years before moving to Brooklyn, N.Y., where she married.

²¹ Joseph B. Towe, a Hampton Singer and member of the class of 1875, became the head of the largest black primary school in Norfolk, Va. He served as an agent of Hampton Institute, spending summer vacations in the North on the school's behalf until his death in 1880.

²² Joseph C. Mebane, born in 1853 in Mebane, N.C., remained after his graduation to teach one year in Hampton's Butler School. Later he attended Oberlin College for a time and in 1882 joined a troupe of traveling singers. "When last heard of," *Twenty-two Years Work* noted, "he was keeping a 'Gentleman's Bar-Room' in Ohio" (p. 54).

²³ John W. Collins taught for two years after graduation and died in 1878.

²⁴ Colonel or Major Crocker was superintendent of schools at Portsmouth.

²⁵ Rev. Adams, a white Southern Baptist minister, took part in the installation of Richard Tolman as Hampton chaplain in 1871.

²⁶ William N. Armstrong, brother of Samuel C. Armstrong, was born and raised in Hawaii, where he was a schoolmate of David Kalakaua, who later became king of the islands (1874-91). Armstrong lived most of his adult life in New York City but maintained his connection with Hawaii and served in the cabinet of King Kamehameha III (1825-54) and as attorney general and commissioner of emigration for his friend, King Kalakaua. Armstrong accompanied Kalakaua on his trip around the world in 1881 and resigned upon his return in opposition to the monarch's free-spending policies. Armstrong later wrote a book about the trip, *Around the World with a King* (1904).

Hampton, Va., Thursday, June 10, 1875

COMMENCEMENT DAY WITH THE COLORED STUDENTS

The morning previous to the trying ordeal of public speaking was spent by the students in examinations, at which great numbers of guests were present. I was struck with the fact that, though the rooms were crowded with strangers, and the students were naturally in a state of high excitement, the dress and manner of all were exceedingly quiet and modest. The girls looked like respectable working-girls, and the boys much as young country teachers would anywhere. All had remarkably good heads, and many showed large frontal development of the brain; some few were so white that at the North no one would have dreamed of their being of the negro race. The majority seemed, however, of the pure black stock. The first class I visited was in grammar, which was very ingeniously taught by a sentence written on the board in *echelon*, as it were and then copied by the students, and each phrase parsed by the means of a sort of grammatical notation, written opposite each word.